GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1098
ANSWERED ON:22.11.2016
Survey for Rare Species
Satpathy Shri Tathagata

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT, FORESTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has conducted any survey to identify the species of rare plants and animals in the country and if so, the details of such species;
(b) whether the Government has the data of rare plants and animals which are on the verge of extinction in the country, if so, the details of the said species and if not, the reasons therefor;
(c) the measures taken by the Government to save the said species from extinction; and
(d) the details of plants and animals species that have become extinct in the country during the past ten years?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) FOR ENVIRONMENT, FOREST AND CLIMATE CHANGE

(SHRI ANIL MADHAV DAVE)

(a) & (b) Botanical Survey of India (BSI) and Zoological Survey of India(ZSI) mandated for survey of plant and animal diversity respectively in the country, have been carrying out survey and documentation of floral and faunal resources of the country including rare and threatened species. Based on their studies and field surveys, BSI has already published four volumes of Red Data Book of Indian Plants and Red List of Threatened Vascular Plant Species in India, which provides information on 1236 threatened plants in the country. On the basis of studies conducted by ZSI and their recommendations, the Ministry has brought out a document titled 'Critically Endangered animal Species of India' in 2011.
Towards conservation of threatened (including endangered and vulnerable) species, the Government of India has established a Protected Area (PA) Network, which primarily covers habitats of threatened mega fauna such as tiger, rhino, elephant, etc.
Biological Diversity Act, 2002, was inter-alia enacted to ensure protection of threatened species and their habitats. Under the provisions of Section 38 of the National Biodiversity Act, 2002, the species which are on the verge of extinction or likely to become extinct in near future as threatened species, are notified.

(c) The Centrally Sponsored Scheme "Integrated Development of Wildlife Habitats" has been modified in 2008-09 by including a new component namely "Recovery of Endangered Species" and 17 species have been identified for recovery viz. Snow Leopard, Bustard (including Floricans), River Dolphin, Hangul, Nilgiri Tahr, Marine Turtles, Dugong & Coral reefs, Edible Nest Swiftlet, Asian Wild Buffalo, Nicobar Megapode, Manipur Brow-antlered Deer, Vultures, Malabar Civet, Indian Rhinoceros, Asiatic Lion, Swamp Deer and Jerdon's Courser.

The periodic assessments carried out in respect of identified species, rhinoceros, Manipur Brow-antlered deer, Edible-nest Swiftlets and lion, have indicated improvement in their population status.

The Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 has been enacted for protection of wild animals, birds and plants against hunting and commercial exploitation. The Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI) has been empowered under the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 to apprehend and prosecute wildlife offenders. The Wildlife Crime Control Bureau has been set up for control of poaching and illegal trade in wildlife and its products.

Under the Assistance to Botanic Gardens scheme, the Ministry has supported 347 number of botanic gardens for conservation of endemic/ threatened plant species of the country. BSI has also brought a number of threatened plants under cultivation in its Acharya Jagdish Chandra Bose Indian Botanic Garden in Howrah, Botanic Garden Indian Republic, Noida and other associated botanic gardens of its regional centres for their ex-situ conservation, thereby complementing the in-situ conservation of such species in protected areas.

(d) As per the research data available with BSI, 18 species of plants are considered as possibly extinct as they have not been collected from wild for more than last fifty years. List of Extinct Plants is enclosed as Annexure.
Among the various animal groups, two species of birds and two of mammals (Annexure) are reported to be extinct primarily due to illegal poaching.

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